

Paul asks Secretary of Defense Cohen to move Army South HQ to Texas *Military is moving command to US, and Texas is best choice say Members of Congress*

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WASHINGTON, DC - US Rep. Ron Paul (R-Tx) and other members of Texas delegation to Congress on Thursday signed a letter to Secretary of Defense William Cohen asking that when the US Army South is moved from Panama to the United States, that the HQ be located in Texas.

Rep. Henry Bonilla (R-Tx) organized the bipartisan effort, along with Reps. Silvestre Reyes (D-Tx) and Ciro Rodriguez (D-Tx).

The congressmen explained in their letter that setting Texas as the new base for the Army South is fiscally responsible, and represents the best choice for both defense needs and the needs of military personnel. The US Army South is responsible for operations in the central and southern regions of the Americas.

"Sites in Texas are available with existing infrastructure and access to both commercial and military airfields," the letter states. "Utilizing existing infrastructure would reduce concerns about high military construction costs or problems with leasing commercial space."

Continuing, the congressmen's letter states that, "We also urge you not to repeat past mistakes in locating to high-cost areas... Recent news accounts indicate that (moving the US Southern Command to Miami, Florida) has resulted in staff sergeants forced to subsist on food stamps." The congressmen cited Texas low-cost of living as compared with other states as being a benefit to military officers and enlisted personnel, alike.

Paul, a former Air Force flight surgeon, said moving the Army South HQ to Texas is a good move for both the military and Texas.

"Our troops need to be in the United States, protecting our borders. By moving Army South to Texas we will ensure that our military can readily defend our borders while still affording them easy access to their Area of Operational Responsibility," said Paul. "Because the headquarters is going to be moved to the U.S. anyway and still keep its operational mission, it only makes

sense that it be located in Texas."

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